TENTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
17TH AND SPRUCE STREETS
PHILADELPHIA 3

DONALD GREY BARNHOUSE, D.D.
MINISTER

RADIO ADDRESS
P. O. BOX 2000

July 8, 1948

Mr. Kenneth S. Gapp, Ph.D., Librarian,
The Theological Seminary Library,
Princeton, New Jersey

Dear Dr. Gapp:

Under separate cover I am having mailed to you a copy of the New Testament in Amharic, similar to the one presented to His Majesty, the Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie I, on the occasion of my trip to Africa in 1946.

I am also having sent to you a copy of Revelation Magazine with an account of my interview with the Emperor, and the story of this New Testament.

In 1944 I heard that His Majesty had become very much interested in the Scriptures, and had had his scholars make a new translation from the original languages into Amharic. The manuscript of this New Testament was the only one in existence. It was done on vellum, illuminated, and ultimately it came through the American Diplomatic Service at the time Mr. Edward Stettinius was Secretary of State, and was forwarded to me. As every name of the Deity was in red, it was necessary to have a color mask made by hand for each page. Following this, each page was photographed, and from the photographs zinc plates and copper plates were made for the printing. Twenty-five thousand copies of the Testament similar to the one I am forwarding to you were printed and shipped to Ethiopia. His Majesty himself decided on the sentence of the title page, and also desired to have the alphabet in the front of the Testament so that people might easily learn to read. One thousand copies of the Testament were presented to the Emperor, and distributed by him to the high officials of his government. The other twenty-four thousand were distributed through the Sudan Interior Mission.

At the time of my visit to the Emperor, he told me that he would like to present to me a manuscript of the New Testament in Old Amharic, which is known as Guize, and that I was to arrange with his secretary as to what inscription I wished to have placed in the volume. The secretary called upon me the next day with the volume that you now have. I saw right away that it was not something that I could use, and that it was best to place it in a library such as that at Princeton Seminary where somebody at least might see it and make use of it. Therefore, although the secretary insisted that the gift was to me, and not to the Seminary, I wrote out the inscription which the palace scribe placed on the fly leaf of the volume, and it was then sealed with the Official Seal as being the gift of the Emperor to me.

That is the volume which I transmitted to Dr. Mackay at the time of my recent visit to Princeton. If there is any other information you wish to have concerning the volume, I will give it to you if I have it. Otherwise, I will attempt to secure it for you.

Yours faithfully,

Donald Grey Barnhouse

Donald Grey Barnhouse

DGB:vk